



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **FORMER TOP OFFICIAL AT BOYS & GIRLS SUMMER CAMP IN TEXAS ARRESTED ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES**

*Arrest is latest in ICE Internet child porn case that has netted 1,200 arrests worldwide*

AUSTIN, Texas — The former director of operations for an upscale summer camp in Texas turned himself over to federal agents last Friday on charges of possessing child pornography after an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents.

Paul Edward Cope, 36, was the director of operations for a Marble Falls, Texas, summer camp until he was terminated in July 2004. Cope turned himself over to authorities after being indicted June 21, 2005 by a federal grand jury in the Western District of Texas on two counts of possessing child pornography. U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrew Austin ordered Cope released after he posted a \$10,000 unsecured bond on the same day he turned himself in to authorities.

Cope's indictment followed a July 2004 search of his business by ICE agents. According to the indictment, a computer forensic analysis of Cope's server and IBM ThinkPad computer by ICE agents revealed more than 1,000 images of one or more minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct and graphic sexual intercourse. In addition, the indictment alleges that the child pornography images had been transported in interstate or foreign commerce.

Cope has not worked for the Marble Falls, Texas, summer camp since ICE agents executed the search warrant on his business office last summer. Following execution of the search warrant, the camp sent out notices to the parents. At this point in the investigation, there's no indication that Cope's activities ever involved any camper; his activities appear limited to downloading images from the Internet. The camp fully cooperated with this investigation.

"For years, child pornographers used the Internet to network and share their sexually explicit images of defenseless children," said Alonzo Pena, special agent-in-charge of ICE San Antonio. "Now we've turned the tables and are using their own tools to identify and prosecute them."

The investigation into Cope grew out of a larger, ongoing investigation by ICE targeting a company in Minsk, Belarus, that provided Internet billing services for 50 child pornography websites worldwide and operated at least four child pornography websites of its own. In January 2004, the company and several of its leaders were charged in Newark, N.J. with child pornography and money laundering violations. Three officers of the company were arrested in Europe and have been extradited to the United States, where they later pleaded guilty. Four officers of two affiliated Internet billing companies in Florida and California have also pleaded guilty.

Having dismantled the leadership of this criminal enterprise, agents in domestic ICE offices and 52 ICE Attaché offices worldwide turned their focus on the thousands of individuals the United States and abroad who purchased subscriptions from the child pornography sites serviced by these Internet billing companies. As part of this effort, ICE agents were able to identify Cope as an individual who had purchased subscriptions to child porn websites, ultimately leading to his indictment.

Thus far, more than 1,200 individuals have been arrested worldwide in this ongoing Internet child pornography investigation. ICE has arrested more than 235 individuals in the United States. Foreign law enforcement, acting on leads provided by ICE, have arrested more than 1,000 individuals in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Japan, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The investigation of Cope and the larger probe into Internet billing companies that service child pornography websites and their subscribers are all part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators. Operation Predator focuses on those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 5,900 individuals, including 532 in Texas.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains mere allegations. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*